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THE Commonweal

Is There A Christian Learning?

by Leo R. Ward

America Houses in Europe

by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn

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THE
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week by week

NEW NOTE IN LIBERALISM

THE National Issues Committee, a new nonpartisan political group headed by Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, has just released its platform —a statement of general aims and beliefs. It is impossible at this point, of course, to predict how the National Committee will go. But what is remarkable about its initial statement is the solid basis for democratic action which it spells out. "We believe," says the Committee in part:

> That God has endowed man with the power to shape his own destiny by the exercise of free will through reason;
>
> That the denial of free will, whether by the innocent who profess intellectual belief in totalitarian doctrines or by tyrants and demagogues who try to practice them, is the denial both of man's opportunity to fulfill his destiny and of his responsibility before God;
>
> That the democratic form of social organization—government of the people, by the people and for the people—is the highest political expression mankind has attained of this power of free will and of reason;
>
> That we Americans, partly through chance and partly through our own conscious self-development, have become one of the chief trustees of this great heritage of mankind;
>
> That the systems of tyranny developed and practiced under the Nazis in Germany and under the rulers of Soviet Russia, based as they are upon the denial of free will, are and of necessity must be the exact opposite of democracy and the most formidable expression of Godlessness . . .

When the formation of the National Issues Committee was announced last month, the *Tablet* of Brooklyn found it worthy of first-page notice. The story was given not one but four insinuating heads. They read: *Mrs. Roosevelt Is Leader of New 'Liberal' Group; Returns from Europe after Boosting Yugoslavia's Red Dictator; To Curb 'Reactionaries'; National Issues Committee Is Planning Education for Ignorant Americans.*

The *Tablet's* patent antipathy toward the new Committee is shared by other Americans, many of whom could, and would, heartily endorse the Credo set down by the Committee in its initial statement if it had been presented under other auspices. But it is unlikely that there will be much sympathy between the two groups. And the question remains: why?

If indeed, as the *Tablet* says, the new Committee is a "liberal" group, it will suffer the general distrust felt not only by the *Tablet* but in many other circles toward American liberalism. To shrug off this antipathy as mere "reaction" is not to face up to the real problems of liberalism today. These problems are rooted not so much in the present as in the past when liberalism in the United States was riding high. Then the very real values and the idealism that went into the movement somehow got all mixed up in the public mind with an arrogantly secularist philosophy of life. In some cases liberals identified their cause, more or less consciously, with the forces of a scientific materialism; the movement often seemed to take a somewhat negative view of those traditional Judaeo-Christian values which have long nourished the West.

In a word, American liberals permitted their movement to become identified in the public mind with a remnant philosophy of nineteenth century rationalism and anti-clericalism. They thereby lost much of the popular support that would have kept the movement moving. Whatever one might think about the reasons for the wane of liberalism there is little doubt that in recent years it did lose dynamism, and the whole nation has thereby suffered. For when liberalism loses face, all the good things for which liberalism stands suffer.

THE most vigorous anti-liberals today are not economic royalists or members of any reactionary privileged caste but ordinary men-in-the-street whose housing, wages, health and political welfare have long been liberalism's chief concern. While American liberalism allowed itself to become a suburban, almost exclusively middle-class movement, the workers have been reading Westbrook Pegler, the New York *Daily News*, the Brooklyn *Tablet*, etc., and have learned, like their mentors, to speak

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derisively of "bleeding hearts," "eggheads," and "do-gooders."

Happily, the simple, traditional truths about God and man set forth in the new Committee's opening statement may be a significant step toward re-establishing communications between American liberalism and the people. For during all the years when the liberals talked archly about Freudian determinism, economic determinism, environmental determinism, moral relativism, the dynamic values of atheistic socialism, etc., the people kept going to Church, kept believing in God, in free will and personal moral responsibility. And nothing in recent history made them think they were wrong.

American liberalism has stood for many fine things through the years. A great deal of selflessness, good sense and old-fashioned idealism has gone into the movement. It is tragic that these values were often obscured by certain prominent liberals' weakness for intellectual fads and philosophic pretensions. Any return to basic Christian (and Jewish) thinking, such as this new statement indicates, should be encouraged—not least of all by those who have the interests of Christianity at heart.

MORE FOOD

THE undeniable fact that in vast areas in the world there is not enough to eat has many causes. It is not because there are too many huma beings the world over for the fruits of the earth sustain them, even at the present stage of proficien in food production.

In some areas poor distribution of the land go hand in hand with an inhuman unconcern for me without means of sustenance. In others ravages floods or droughts, locusts or plant diseases, are n repaired primarily because of tragic deficiencies transportation. And most heinous of all is the ten ency of commodity speculators—in league wi venal government officials—to walk off with t vital food shipments sent into a needy country.

From a wider angle there is the chronic inabili of a country with large food surpluses like t United States to get its great surpluses to the hung in many foreign lands. That so many bushels our surplus wheat are actually stored in idle freigh ers, which remain at anchor here, provides t crowning irony in a prospect which compass millions of undernourished abroad and thousan of farmers here beset with anxiety over the lac of market for their crops.

To say that distribution difficulties have a lot t do with the widespread malnutrition in the world not to dismiss the very real pressure of populatio upon resources that exists in many regions. An emergency food shipments from outside supply n long-term answer. Moreover, a key contention the neo-Malthusians is that advances in medicin and hygiene in underdeveloped areas will soon mak the population pressure even more acute. Sharp d clines in infant mortality, tropical diseases and th like will so increase the population of the globe, a they view things, that more starvation than ever inevitable.

But why should great advances have to be con fined to medicine alone? Are there not variou means of increasing food supplies to more tha make up for the greater populations? No doub as intimated above, increased productivity can b attained by economic reorganization. The Inter national Labor Office's Asian Regional Conference which opened in Tokyo, September 14, takes th village as the focus for year-round productivity pro grams. It calls for small capital outlay and nev types of part-time local industry.

The world's scientists themselves are constantl coming forward with new methods that will greatl increase current food supplies (besides pointing t such virtually untapped sources as the sea floo and uncultivated tropical lands). Only last week American chemists and biologists discussed a few of the newer things that can be done. The forme group, meeting in Chicago, took up the use of anti biotics to increase the food supply. Aureomycin ha

NEXT WEEK

ED WILLOCK writes about the development of Catholic radicalism in this country.

"The Catholic Worker movement came to see society from the bottom up, that is from the person up to the institution. They saw Hotel Metropole from the kitchen and the employes' locker room. They saw the steel industry from beside the blast furnace and from under the striker's placard. They saw the World's Fair through the eyes of the day workers who clawed the swampy flats and dug holes out of which the wonders of the world would grow; they saw these same donkey laborers expelled when their work was finished and then driven out of New York so as to clean up the streets in preparation for the incoming visitors. They saw the ocean liners from the crew's quarters, and the agricultural industry from the sharecroppers' shacks. They saw all these things because they went among the poor, not to save but to be saved."

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been found effective in producing bigger animals through enlarging the whole bone structure; streptomycin has proved completely effective in overcoming certain plant blights; antibiotics are also successful in protecting meat and fish from spoilage. The biologists, meeting in Madison, Wis., discussed experiments in artificial photosynthesis which appeared to be twenty times as effective as the natural photosynthesis of sunlight in capturing and storing solar energy in growing plants.

It is not scientific means that are lacking so much as human and Christian concern.

THE COURT

TOO MANY citizens the Supreme Court is remote, lofty—and of no immediate concern. The legislative and executive branches of the government, subject to popular control and concerned with practical issues, seem far more real. This popular attitude is understandable but unfortunate, for it is the Court which is, in a final sense, the shaper of America's destiny, the channel of its traditions and the guarantee of its integrity.

At a time like the present, when a Chief Justice has died and a new one is to be appointed, these things are remembered. The Court's importance in the national life is rehearsed. This is as it should be—at all times. But especially now.

There have been periods in our history when the Court's role was a relatively passive one. These were times when no great constitutional issues were in debate, when, the climate of American life being tranquil, it did not matter, much, if the members of the Court were tranquil too. Such a time was the period from 1888 until 1910 when Melville W. Fuller presided over the Court, and again the era of the 1920's when William Howard Taft was its leader. History was comparatively quiet then.

But there are other times when history is not quiet, when great forces threaten to divide the nation on fundamental issues—issues which ultimately must be decided by the Court. In these times not tranquillity but genius and vision are needed. Such a time was the 1850's, when Roger B. Taney was Chief Justice, and such a time is 1953.

But Taney was wedded to a sterile, a "tranquil," legalism. Faced with an issue which involved the conscience and destiny of the nation he rendered a decision narrowed by that legalism, and it took a civil war to reverse him. Issues similar to those of the 1850's face the Court now. Questions of civil rights, civil liberties, federal power and local autonomy divide us again. A new Roger Taney, one hundred years later, could be disastrous.

Harry Truman made many wise and courageous decisions during his years in the White House. His appointments to the Court were not notable among them. Here that passionate partisanship for which he is famous was sometimes seen at its worst. As a result of it the present Court has not seemed consistently distinguished.

There is no place for partisanship in the Court. There is no place for mediocrity. There is no place for the paying of political debts. The man whom President Eisenhower appoints to succeed Fred M. Vinson should therefore be a jurist above suspicion of partisan partiality. He should be one who, understanding the challenge to America's traditions and free institutions offered by the times, can act above party to meet that challenge.

It does not really matter whether the new Chief Justice be Republican or Democrat, "conservative" or "liberal," Catholic or Protestant or Jew. What matters greatly is that he be a great Chief Justice. The President's opportunity here is historic. We trust that he will realize it with distinction.

LABOR AND THE PUBLIC

WHEN Martin Durkin was appointed Secretary of Labor, everyone in the country must have heard the Cabinet described as a body made up of eight millionaires and one plumber. The line was funny enough, and it stayed in circulation a long time, probably because there was just enough truth in it for the gag to carry a sting. Now the joke may be dead, since Mr. Durkin felt it necessary to go back to his plumbers' union. But the fact that the cabinet has lost its plumber only highlights to an even greater degree the extent to which the Administration has come to be considered a "business" regime, and one in which organized labor has no share.

The Democrats will undoubtedly make political hay out of Mr. Durkin's resignation. Certainly the contrast between promise and practice on Taft-Hartley amendment gives them considerable ammunition. But—short-term considerations aside—Mr. Durkin's resignation raises questions that go beyond amending the Taft-Hartley law or the outcome of the 1954 elections.

Heady though their victory with Eisenhower may have been, the Republicans would hardly risk antagonizing any large section of the population if they thought they would lose a substantial number of votes in the process. A Congressman may vote against a measure urged on him by the farmers' organizations or the NAM or the AMA, but his "No" is likely to be couched very politely. Yet when

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it comes to organized labor, there seems to be on the part of many Congressmen a strong tendency to add insult to injury.

Why should this be so? Any man in public office necessarily acquires some facility at reading the public mind. Judging by the conduct of the Republican Congressmen, they are evidently convinced, not only that public sympathy is not on the side of organized labor, but that many union members do not side with their leaders on political matters, even on measures like Taft-Hartley in which labor has a great and obvious stake.

This diagnosis of the public mind by the men who have to think in terms of votes may well be correct. There is no getting around the fact that the tradition in the United States is one of individualism. The average citizen, by and large, still looks on unions with a certain suspicion, and this attitude extends to many union men, thousands of whom are members in name only.

As a result, labor unions have to bear a special burden. The American Medical Association does not fall into disrepute because an occasional doctor overcharges, the National Association of Manufacturers does not get a bad press because a manufacturer here and there produces shoddy goods, and the Bar Association continues to be a respected body even though some lawyers chase ambulances. But one Joe Ryan is enough to give the entire American Federation of Labor a black eye, and the CIO will be a long time erasing from the public memory traces of the expelled Communist unions.

The existence of this double standard may be unfair, but it is a fact, and one which is likely to have consequences long after the Durkin affair is forgotten. Legislators will continue to feel free to ignore organized labor just as long as they are sure the public is on their side. In a very real sense, Joe Ryan may have cost Martin Durkin his job.

DULLES AND EUROPE

MR. DULLES is either very smart or very lucky. Which quality you credit him with would seem to depend on which party label you claim. The cracker-barrel superficiality of many of his recent addresses has not been very impressive, but while his policies have frequently been unorthodox, the results have been real.

He gambled on indifference to Mossadegh in Iran, and it paid off. He gambled on the European Defense Community plan in the face of almost universal criticism, and in the re-election of Chancellor Adenauer, it seems to be paying off. He made a risky but brave and admirable statement on the consequences of Chinese intervention in Indochina and there is reason to think that it will work. He is gambling on a hard, forthright policy in regard to the planned Asia conference, and such may indeed be the only course possible between the stubborn Mr. Rhee and the ruthless Mr. Mao, even though it hurts our public relations elsewhere. Of course, Mr Dulles says that we can hardly conduct foreign policy by public opinion poll—a statement both true and dangerous. If public opinion were negligible in the foreign policy field there would be no need for the psychological warfare Mr. Dulles so loves.

The triumph of Chancellor Adenauer is the biggest victory the West has won in the cold war in a year. It has boomed the stock of EDC to the highest point since the European Army plan was first proposed. England now favors the EDC; Germany favors it. Italy and the Low Countries undoubtedly will follow their leadership. The problem is France The problem always seems to be France. This could be the moment for a splash of the French genius which first proposed the coal-steel pool; but France struggling for a way out of the most serious crisis of the decade, is unlikely to be more than an unenthusiastic follower, pressed into EDC by force of circumstance, in repayment for the great new U.S contribution to the Indochinese war.

But either way EDC is now almost certain to come into existence, and that is good news.

EDC can be considered both in terms of the "Europe idea" and of the cold war. Following upon the initial successes of the coal-steel pool, its materialization would be the great unifier. A common army within the next year would almost certainly be followed by an agricultural pool and a European parliament with limited powers. And then, Russia or no Russia, Europe would have broken the shackles of centuries and would indeed be in a new and hopeful era.

The serious objections to EDC have come from those who feel that it would freeze the status quo in Europe vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and its satellites eliminating any chance of a negotiated Russian withdrawal from any of the satellites or any chance of German reunion. It is hard to see any validity in these objections today. When they come from the left, they assume a present Russian willingness to negotiate away a satellite, and such are the things dreams are made of.

So we come back to the old policy in Europe—the one Mr. Dulles refused to relinquish. We work for a united, even a federated, European community, armed and prosperous and free. And if that does not offer exciting prospects of winning the cold war it offers at least a pretty good guarantee against losing it.

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Is There a Christian Learning?

"A CATHOLIC SCHOLAR IS MORE THAN, AND OTHER THAN, A CATHOLIC WHO IS A SCHOLAR; HIS LEARNING HAS SOME KIND OF PLUS VALUE."

LEO R. WARD

AT least twice in every generation we exchange punches as to whether or not America has any Catholic scholars. The trouble is that the debate always leaves a prior question much too open. Perhaps the notion of "Catholic scholar" is an impossible hybrid. If the breed exists, what is a Catholic scholar, a Catholic learning, or a Catholic university?

The records show that American Catholic schools were set up in the first place to save the faith and morals of students. This was a good and needed end, though neither historically nor ideally the end of schools. By and large this "save the faith and morals" purpose is, even today, the end of Catholic schools, most of all on the lower levels.

Catholic schools have long ago assumed an apologetic and propaganda end. Many administrators and some professors like first of all to make the Church look good, and thousands of students are burning up, not for any art or science, but to convert the world. Think of the invincible Students Mission Crusade, and of Catholic Action students who find serious study a distraction. Protestant as well as Catholic students like this activist and anti-intellectual end. Schools are conceived as defensible, as necessary, as good because they speak well for the Church and put her in a good light before the gentiles.

More than the lower grades, church-related colleges and universities have this apologetic and propaganda aim. Most of the good Catholics who are good scholars operate unconsciously under the rule of this idea, and so do many respectable Catholic academic societies. The assumption is that a good Catholic who is a good scholar is either automatically a Catholic scholar or no such thing as a Catholic scholar exists.

Father Ward, a member of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, teaches philosophy at Notre Dame.

In either case this good Catholic who is a good scholar shows non-Catholics that a Catholic after all can be a scholar and that a scholar after all can be a Catholic. Thus schools, research and scholarship have apologetic value and are justified in being.

It goes without saying that these immediately practical ends, to save the faith and to preach the faith, fit in remarkably well with the American pioneer and pragmatic climate, with the reformer idea and with the idea that schools exist to make people good.

Another view, right or wrong, is notably different. It is a view toward which Newman, with his notion of a pure, untrammeled intellectual end, struggled. It is expressed by Maritain and Gilson and others as applicable to philosophy, and in a wonderful chapter on the intelligence in the service of Christ, Gilson suggested it as applicable to any savant. Dr. von Hildebrand put it into one little phrase. He said that the existence of Catholic universities must be pressed, not directly for faith or morals, but for adequacy of knowledge.

This view is that a Catholic scholar is more than, and other than, a Catholic who is a scholar. His learning has some kind of plus value. A Catholic scholar has, of course, to be profoundly Catholic and profoundly a scholar. But his learning has also to be Catholic, at least if he is in any field of the humanities: social sciences, philosophy, literature or the arts; and it must be Catholic in a positive way. Let us try to illustrate how his learning is positively Catholic and how he is a Catholic scholar.

HOMER was an adept and wise man, and so was Dante a man adept in his art and full of wisdom. Aristotle was a scholar, and so too was Aquinas. But there is a remarkable difference. Dante knew

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and expressed things that Homer did not know and could not express. Aquinas knew things that Aristotle did not know and could hardly know. Dante and Aquinas believed things that the others did not believe, but that is not now the question. They also knew or claimed to know things that the others did not even guess might be true: things about God, man and human conduct.

The differences can perhaps be put in any of these three famous old formulas. The first is St. Augustine's version of Isaias (7,9) which he made to read, "Unless you had believed, you would not have understood." The others are, *Credo ut intelligam,* and *Fides quaerens intellectum.* Understated, the gist is this: Believing, perhaps I will be better able to understand some things. If I am actively and profoundly a believing Jew or Christian, I have a better chance to understand the nature of God, and both the nature of man and that he has a nature—as against narrower existentialists—and the good and truth in the love of all for all, and in humility and sacrifice—as against ordinary secularists.

If as a scholar I understand or better understand some such things, thanks to belief, then I am not merely a Jew or a Christian who is a scholar, but a Jewish or Christian scholar. The sum of things understood or better understood (we would never perfectly understand God, man, or the law of conduct) with the indispensable aid of beliefs is the additional content in Judaeo-Christian learning.

This sum enters learning as content or matter. All other learning is also available to this scholar, and he is bound, as a pagan is bound, to master any of it relevant to his field. The learning is specifically what it is, namely Judaeo-Christian, because of the believer's relation to the Law and the Gospel. This specification is the formal aspect, and gives form to the learning from kindergarten through university, and also outside the schools. The form would make the learning to be Judaeo-Christian learning. We may say in passing that Newman, marvelously aware of form, worked out learning "in a Catholic form" much better as rector of the Catholic University of Ireland than in his *Idea* where this form is mentioned.

If there is anything to this third view, a Judaeo-Christian learning is possible and historically exists, and more and more of it is creatable. So, too, the Jewish and Catholic scholar, the Jewish or Christian school, college and university. Otherwise all that can be achieved is a man who is Jewish or Christian in his beliefs and his life, but is secular in his learning, since in such a case any learning that is not directly theological is in its nature secular.

To be concrete, why does any so-called Catholic school bother to be accredited? Is it merely to look good and "to make people good," or is it really for the sake of learning? And if it is for learning, is most of this learning bound to be secular? Is the achievement merely secular learning with faith alongside, faith possessed by the learner? This would reduce to a positivistic fideism, a sort of "secularize strongly and believe more strongly." The same questions apply to research, scholarship, schools and universities. We do not want any of these for the sake of Christian learning if no such learning can exist.

SUCH ARE the three views, more or less unconsciously held, of Catholic schools and scholars—"save the faith," "preach the faith," and a "Catholic learning." I think that the last would fully justify Catholic schools and scholars because it alone could create them. I think the "man is Catholic, learning is secular" view is implicitly held by many Catholics who are scholars and by most who are teachers or administrators in what we call Catholic colleges and universities. The idea of looking good has a great appeal, even to men with reputations. In that way it could be that many who fight secularism in education are engaged full time in propagating secularism in education.

The circumstances that these people are Catholic makes no difference, in their view or in fact, to any of their learning, and often they are anxious to show that it makes no difference. Old as the question of a distinctively Christian learning is, well raised by St. Augustine, sharply raised by St. Anselm, and again stock in trade ever since it was renewed by Blondel two generations ago, many American Catholics who are scholars seem never to have heard of it.

Let us put it again, this time in terms of a negative illustration. The merit of Descartes was that he was a great creative worker in mathematics and philosophy, and that, at least in his own mind, he was a faithful Catholic. On the view of those who hold that a Catholic scholar is a Catholic who is a scholar, Descartes qualifies beautifully, and a dozen Descartes would at once constitute a Catholic university. It seems to me that the conclusion is incorrect, and that it is incorrect because such a view of Catholic scholar and Catholic university is wrong at the start. (Descartes was in general a savant. It is interesting that a man of today who is distinguished as Catholic and as mathematician says that perhaps being a Catholic makes a difference in mathematics.)

Descartes failed on one side, the side of separating things that should be kept only distinct. On the other side there is the perpetual and fatal danger of not keeping those things distinct, of confusing things, and of trying to let piety, to say nothing of faith, do duty for technique and knowledge.

We want neither Descartes' and many others' exclusion, nor the common easy-out confusion. Our schools

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are full of both, and the two are readily found in the same person. At least we should ask whether there is any such thing possible as a Catholic learning. We need many things today in the schools. We need to defend freedom: the right of schools to investigate and to teach, the right of certain types of schools to exist and the right of citizens to teach. We need to defend the right to religious literacy.

If it is available, what would help most in the schools of Catholics is a luminous conception of Catholic learning, Catholic scholar and Catholic school. With that we should have a much better chance to put things together, each in its place, and to advance. Till we have such a conception, our greatest need is to inquire into the species or possible species called Catholic scholar, Catholic learning, and Catholic university

If there is no such species, the particular good of what we often call Catholic schools and scholars is only to protect faith and morals and to advance the faith. That good then is not, as von Hildebrand says it should be, adequacy of knowledge; it is not directly an intellectual good at all, but a sort of undercover missionary and parish good.

The other view, that of a Judaeo-Christian learning, if any such learning is in the cards, is more free and creative and would seem to open up immense possibilities. It would directly promote the end and good of scholar and school, and, as Newman suggested, it might be a great good to peace and science and health and society. The time has come for universities to consider the question, above all in a country where we have been so lavish in supporting what we call Catholic education.

HOW SHOULD THE U.S. BE PRESENTED ABROAD?

America Houses in Europe

ERIK VON KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN

THE present writer, it should be said in all candor, has long been a critic of the content, direction and methods of American propaganda on the Continent. In the past I have considered American propaganda misdirected because it misrepresented the character, genius and perennial historic forces of the United States and also because it was bound to fail locally. It never even tried to win the attention of the real intellectual leaders on the Continent but used a rather ineffective method of mass appeal; and it addressed itself primarily to those on the left and left-of-center. In other words, it was directed to European forces, circles and trends of thought with roots going back no further than the Enlightenment or the French Revolution.

Yet it would be unjust to overlook the fact that these failures, the groping in the dark which was made the more noticeable by the trial and error method, and the efforts to enter valueless alliances which were characteristic of the 1945-1948 period, had a certain historical inevitability. They have to be understood in the terms of the hard fact of the Russian alliance and the general misinterpretation by Americans of the real nature of Fascism and Nazism. Many of the mistakes were inevitable, given the vigor of certain Anglo-Saxon myths about the Continent which persisted through both World Wars.

Yet even these mistakes in the American propaganda approach belong more or less to the past. The whole 1945 political and cultural policy of the United States in Europe was dead as a doornail even before the Democratic Administration left Washington.

Nevertheless, a series of recent events lowered the prestige of the United States in Central Europe, almost as drastically as indiscriminate bombardments, the Morgenthau policy, the Unconditional Surrender formula, "denazification," and Russian appeasement had earlier. I refer, of course, to the cracking down on American propaganda agencies. This repudiation of Americans by Americans baffled the man in the street and created a bad impression among the politically and intellectually alert elements on the Continent. It aroused compassion for individual Americans in the most unexpected quarters and brought on a wave of sympathy for the most important of all American propaganda institutions, the former U. S. Information Centers, the *Amerikahauser*.

I know the *Amerikahauser* well, both as a visitor and lecturer. I have been to all of them in this part of the world. The *Amerikahauser* were first established

Mr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn is an Austrian journalist and novelist who lectures frequently in the U.S.

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by the military government as U. S. Information Centers in a number of German and Austrian cities. Later they were combined with similar institutions in other countries and placed under the control of the U. S. State Department. Originally they were installed as media of "re-education" and as propaganda organs to sell the United States to a population which had only recently been at war with America. There still are *Amerikahauser* in some German cities in the immediate vicinity of great heaps of rubble on which small lamps are placed on the first day of November as a token of remembrance of the corpses still buried under them. I mention this only to show the tremendous handicaps the *Amerikahauser* labored under. The re-educational aspect of the program was dropped as soon as the relationship between Western Germany and the United States was placed on another footing, but the role of cultural bridge-building remained. Today the main tasks of these institutes are to create sincere friendship and interest in America, and to foster amity and understanding among the other nations of the free world. As a matter of fact, one of the most important missions of the *Amerikahauser* is to create an all-European spirit.

The *Amerikahauser* sponsor lending and reference libraries which are excellently stocked and can be used by anyone without cost; they conduct musical libraries that offer patrons scores and phonograph records; they are equipped with auditoriums and conduct valuable lecture programs; they arrange art exhibitions (of American art as well as of local art); they offer English-language lessons and a variety of literary and social-study courses; they show movies of cultural interest and present readings of American plays. Some have special rooms and libraries for children; some sponsor circulating libraries-on-wheels which visit smaller towns. In many places the America Houses have become *the* cultural centers.

OBVIOUSLY these institutes are not faultless. The directors of the America Houses, who must be U. S. Citizens, are poorly paid by American standards. Some are State Department officials and are very well trained; others are idealists with excellent qualifications for their jobs. Some directors, it must be said, could be a great deal more efficient than they are. For instance, they have not been doing the thing which, in my opinion, alone promises full success, i.e., seeking out German intellectual leaders. Too often they are still trying directly to catch the "broad public." For this reason the *Amerikahauser,* at least in the past, have tried, sometimes too eagerly, to represent America in flattering colors. The representation of the United States as a country where only milk and honey flow, where poverty is unknown, liberty is limitless and justice, equality, fraternity reign supreme either will encounter disbelief or create downright resentments.

Yet I do not wish to give the impression that the *Amerikahauser* have been doing nothing but boosting and boasting. It is merely a personal impression that they have not gone far enough in objectivity and have not avoided all the pitfalls of that "Americanist" propaganda which was so aptly criticized in Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind.* Never undervalue the effect of sincerity on an intelligent person! The modern American novel which accents the dismal aspects of life in the U. S. is by no means the wicked Ambassador of God's Own Country that some Americans believe it to be. *The Grapes of Wrath,* which Goebbels ordered reprinted in the Reich during the War, was perhaps more helpful in building a bridge between the continents than all the labors of the pan-democrats, re-educators and plumbing-plus-cellophane enthusiasts lumped together.

Mistakes have been made. But they also have been gradually eliminated. Today the *Amerikahauser* represent one of the finest accomplishments of America in Europe, facing up as they do not only to local obstacles but also to a vigorous counter-propaganda from the East. Their tasks could not be carried out without the enthusiastic support in time and energy of American and European lecturers and artists who get nothing for their work but a fairly generous *per diem* allowance for expenses (between nine and ten dollars) and free transportation within the country of their performance. The (native) program directors often have to work until 10 p.m. and frequently are the ones who bear the brunt of the battle. The quality of the poorly paid America House directors has also been steadily improved. Without security of tenure, they and their harassed personnel have been living from one year to the next, working without the prospect of a real career. For the Office of Public Affairs in Bonn, which labors under the narrowly defined limits set by Washington, one can have nothing but praise.

THE services these *Amerikahauser* have rendered to people in Europe are invaluable. Their existence is even a military necessity because the U. S. Army has not succeeded (nor has it earnestly tried) to act as a link between the two worlds. Certain efforts, it is true, are being made to establish Army-civilian contacts, but for reasons we do not want to dwell on, there has been little response. There remain the *Amerikahauser* with their amenities and treasures. There are books in English and German which can be borrowed, and since public libraries are scarce (and private libraries expensive), this is a rare treat for

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many a native. What other opportunity would most people over here have to read *Gone With the Wind,* the later novels of Hemingway, Faulkner, and Thomas Wolfe, the poems of Emily Dickinson and Robert Lowell, or the plays of Eugene O'Neill and Thornton Wilder? Even mobile libraries reaching the smaller centers are spreading the good tidings that the New World has a literature which can stand comparison with anything Europe has produced. Then consider the value of the reference libraries. The merchant who wants to know what Sears-Roebuck is charging for a kerosene lamp, the doctor eager to learn something about the latest developments in plastic surgery or biochemistry, the priest interested in the attitude of the Church in America towards trade unions, the architect who wants to study prevailing American fashions in rural homes, the professor interested in last year's volume of the *Journal of Modern History,* the farmer

to whom a vital piece of agricultural information will be passed on free of charge—these and many more have made excellent use of the libraries.

The important thing here is that general knowledge (not only information about American affairs) is given by an American institution. To this must be added the free lectures, which have a mighty appeal to the impoverished middle class, the language instruction, the exhibitions, the musical performances of American artists of all races, creeds and colors. Thus, slowly, slowly, the impression sinks in that America has real values above and beyond refrigerators, motor cars, beauty queens, lurid advertising and chewing gum. People over here are gradually starting to realize that no civilization should ever be judged by accidentals and that America is no mere Behemoth to the West, as materialistic and alien as the Leviathan to the East, but forms a key part of our Western, in its roots still basically Christian, civilization.

OBVIOUSLY, it would be a mistake to make these fine institutions, which have revolutionized propaganda, into mere ideological mouthpieces or to paralyze them by a severe restriction of their budget. There should be no question of Continental Europe's aping Anglo-Saxonry or of America's aping Germany. (Remember Stephen Leacock's wonderful sketch of the United States ruled by a victorious Prussia—back in 1917—with a description of the birthday celebrations for the Kaiser in the New York subways? It would be more tragic than comic if that prank were staged in reverse.) The real task of the *Amerikahauser* is to inform, to be a place of learning and to provide a common ground between Americans and their late enemies.

This writer does not in the least sympathize with American leftism; he stands, rather, far to the ('libertarian') right. But he also realizes that a certain leftist tradition with all its ramifications does belong to the American scene, that it has native roots and that, therefore, it is an integral part of a full-scale representation of the United States. A U. S. Information Library without the works of Tom Paine, Emma Lazarus, Theodore Dreiser, Lincoln Steffens, Upton Sinclair or some of America's pink periodicals is like a Catholic university without the works of Luther, Calvin, Rousseau and Marx—a "unity" but not a "university." One has to remember with horror the remark of Amr-ibn-el-Ass who said after the capture of Alexandria that its library ought to be burned because the books therein either repeat the Koran, in which case they are useless, or contradict it, which just proves their worthlessness.

Every sincere friend of America in Europe wants to have the United States represented as it is: a nation of a pluralist character, just as ours in Europe are, not a monolith without width, warmth or variety. Of the menaces of the different forms of Neo-Islam, past and present, we of the Old World have had our fill. The sick West needs a truly Western leadership. This sort of leadership you Americans have to provide. Your hour to act wisely, judiciously and generously has come.

AN APPEAL

Most Rev. S. Ferrando, S.D.B., Bishop of Shillong, Assam, India, seeks funds to build a much needed hospital that will be open to people of every caste and creed. It would be especially fitted to treat the prevalent tropical diseases. Bishop Ferrando suggests donations for such equipment as a cot or a bedside table-locker ($20), a stock or linen cupboard ($40), or a medicine stand ($50). Contributions for this hospital may be sent to Salesian Missions, 148 Main St., New Rochelle, N. Y.

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THE SCREEN

THIS HAPPY BREED

ALEC Guinness' new vehicle is a typically saucy tale about a captain who ferries a boat from Gibraltar to Africa. He's a very smug, self-satisfied chap proud of the way he has mapped out his life for his personal comfort—for at Gibraltar he has a wife (Celia Johnson), a nice home-loving body who cooks well and keeps an immaculate house; and in Africa he has a mistress, played by Yvonne De Carlo with lots of what we used to call It back in the twenties. Guinness is at his best in the made-to-order role of the captain. His smirk at what he's getting away with, and complete aplomb when he becomes careless and each woman gets the present meant for the other (Yvonne gets an apron, and Celia a Bikini bathing suit) are wonderful to behold.

The main trouble with "The Captain's Paradise" is that Producer-director Anthony Kimmins lets his story drag at times and when he has used all the cute lines Alec Coppel and Nicholas Phipps thought up for their script, he has little more to say or do. The leads and the supporting cast, especially Charles Goldner, play the piece well; and there are plenty of laughs in the variations on the one theme—as when sedate Guinness sambas with Yvonne, or when the two women finally meet and compare notes without realizing they are talking about the same man. I suppose the whole thing is meant to be a fable for adults about the two sides of man. That women also have their two sides becomes evident when these girls rebel: Celia wants to kick up her heels and Yvonne wants nothing so much as to get into the kitchen and make fishcakes.

IT'S odd that the film makers (Director Anthony Kimmins and Scriptwriter Alec Coppel) who were so bright with "The Captain's Paradise" were so sluggish in handling "Mr. Denning Drives North." In this they couldn't make up their minds whether they were doing a tragedy, comedy, chase thriller or a psychological mystery. It all comes out a confused mystery that isn't even saved by John Mills and Phyllis Calvert in the leads.

"Mr. Denning Drives North" has several starts even after the first one that turns out to be a nightmare, and for a long time you aren't quite sure if Mr. Denning really killed the cad who was making a play for his daughter or whether his peculiar behavior led him to make up that story too. When he gets too concerned about the body he buried in the woods and his wife calmly tells him not to be petty, you're sure that somebody is pulling somebody's leg. But the spoof never comes off and, as the plot grows more and more complicated, you are certain that yours is the leg being pulled.

THE English can also fall on their faces when they try to get too pretentious in their movies. "It Started in Paradise," an elaborate J. Arthur Rank production in handsome Technicolor, tries to do with the *haute couture* business what "All About Eve" did with the theatrical business, but it lacks the drive of the American movie and it lacks Anne Baxter, who was so thoroughly diabolic in disposing of Bette Davis. However Jane Hylton is convincing as a fashion designer who gets rid of dignified Martita Hunt and then is finally supplanted by Muriel Pavlow. But no one in his right mind could believe in the men (played by Ian Hunter, Brian Worth, Terence Morgan, Ronald Squire) who get involved in all the high-class throat cutting.

The big fashion show at the finale tries hard to tie in with the recent Coronation events, but so far I haven't seen any women in this year of Elizabeth II wearing dresses inspired by the costumes worn by dames in the reign of Elizabeth I. The film's title, in case you are curious, comes from a gag about fashions starting in Eden when Eve wore the first fig leaf—or Adam designed it for her.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"CATHOLICS AND SCIENCE"

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: I was very much interested in Mr. Pleasants' article, "Catholics and Science," which appeared in your number of August 28th. It is a pleasure to say that I agree essentially with most of it. The general question of "Catholics and Scholarship" crops up periodically among Catholics, and when approached with reason and understanding, does Catholic education much good.

As Mr. Pleasants intimates by his reference to St. Thomas Aquinas, when he refers to sciences in the sense of research within the fields of the natural sciences, he is speaking of the warp and woof of scholarship, the systematic search for truth.

The old bugaboo of Science versus Religion is hardly a serious problem today. It would be carrying coals to Newcastle to discuss the subject among scholars. There is, of course, no problem there. It represents in my opinion a genuinely serious problem in the minds of the partially or inadequately trained, of whom we have

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an alarmingly increasing number in the United States today. Some would call this group the class of the "half-educated." But I do not wish to discuss this subject here. I mention this merely to justify the focusing of my comments on Mr. Pleasants' article around the more general topic of Catholics and Scholarship.

Naturally, in discussing Catholics and Scholarship we must have before us as clear-cut an understanding of the topic as possible. Some would understand the phrase to mean simply persons who are active in the systematic investigation of intellectual problems and who profess the Catholic faith. It would, of course, be a practically impossible task to discover the religious persuasion of the authors of all the works of any scholarly excellence which have appeared in the United States during any given period. I have no statistics of any kind on this, but I am thoroughly convinced that the number is much greater than such statistics as Mr. Pleasants gives would lead us to suspect.

It seems to me much more feasible and profitable to consider the topic of "Catholics and Scholarship" in the light of the training given students in the Catholic educational system and its efficacy in producing scholars. All that I propose to do in this letter is to mention a few phases of this general subject and give some personal observation on each.

In the first place, scholarship is not an activity carried on by a few "egg-heads" secluded in ivory towers. Scholarship represents a systematic and accurate method of thinking, the teaching of which should be a serious consideration of all teachers, adapted to the intellectual level of students, from the first grade on. Thus this is a very serious question for all educators, and for Catholic educators, who are blessed with the true faith, in particular. I discussed this subject at some length in a talk at the opening of the fall term of the Institutum Divi Thomae in 1952.

To jump at once to the field of higher education, to what degree do our Catholic colleges prepare students to be scholars? At once, one meets the fallacy that training for a liberal education and training for a career as a scholar are incompatible. On the contrary, the two are complements, one of the other. It is difficult to see how anyone can get a liberal education without a training for scholarship at the same time, and vice versa. This, I am convinced, can be persuasively demonstrated.

To what extent are our Catholic colleges doing this? This question might well be expressed more broadly. To what extent are our American colleges doing this? Except for a few private institutions and still fewer of the state variety, this is being done increasingly ineffectively. Our Catholic colleges are more or less caught in this maelstrom. Without any support from an educational foundation and without the slightest ballyhoo, Father J. M. Campbell has developed a college at the Catholic University of America with a curriculum, unfortunately named "Program of Concentration," which is doing this job most effectively. It is having a tremendous influence on other colleges, especially Catholic colleges, and still more markedly on Catholic colleges for women. This is most heartening with reference to our topic "Catholics and Scholarship." Much also could be said on this phase of the main subject.

As for our graduate schools or universities proper, a few fundamental facts must be borne in mind. Up to 1890, it could not be said that any university in the United States, Catholic or non-Catholic, was distinguished for scholarship. Americans regularly went to Europe for their training in research. At about the same time, Johns Hopkins and Clark Universities, and a little later, the University of Chicago, were established in protest to this trend and with the avowed purpose of emphasizing real university studies. At the same time, the Catholic University of America was opened with essentially the same purpose, although at that time, Catholic higher education on the college level was hardly a vigorous thing. Institutions of higher education for women under Catholic auspices were unknown, and those for men very few in number and strictly on an undergraduate level. The establishment of these new universities had a tremendous influence on the growth and development of scholarly studies in the United States, that of the Catholic University of America naturally being more directly on Catholic institutions of higher education. But I wish to point out that Catholic education in general in the United States at that time was quite an infant, and for it to have had a definite part in the movement to improve graduate studies was a remarkable achievement in scholarship. Incidentally, a few years later the Association of American Universities was established to distinguish institutions which in the minds of American educators deserved the name of university and those that did not, and the Catholic University of America became one of the fourteen charter members.

Another great impetus toward the development of real universities as training centers for scholarship was the evaluation of individual departments of American universities, proposing to give work for the doctorate, by the American Council on Education about a generation ago. Catholic higher education did not fare very well in this evaluation, I must confess.

Catholic universities in the performance of their function as genuine universities, to train teachers and research specialists, in brief, face the following difficulties. Increasing costs without a corresponding increase of financial support is a growing problem. Not only is it becoming increasingly difficult to offer salaries which will attract and retain good teachers and scholars, but the burden of maintaining and developing adequate physical equipment grows heavier daily. The

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increase of fees to meet this problem has reached a point where it may well be considered whether or not we are for financial reasons driving our young people into state institutions.

The importance of subsidizing and encouraging research within Catholic universities is on the whole well appreciated by administrators of these institutions. Perhaps they do not do so sufficiently well. However, when the president of a Catholic university who is struggling to meet so-called current expenses is faced with choice of soliciting a special contribution from a well-disposed layman, either to meet current bills or to subsidize research, research in the natural course of events will lose out, and pardonably so.

The general attitude and spirit toward research in our Catholic universities is, in my opinion, excellent. There is very little of the "bluff" that is so common in universities generally. Scholars receive the greatest respect from all.

The Catholic layman of wealth and also he of some higher intellectual training have failed Catholic research most. The Catholic philanthropist is in a position to help Catholic education generally through his endowment of research in Catholic universities far more than he realizes. How can he be made aware of this great need, and, I would say, of his responsibility in this matter?

Without any intention of insinuating that Catholics should rest on their oars in the field of research, I wish to say that thus far, all things considered, the record of Catholic education in the field of research is one of which to be proud. I also wish to say that it is vitally important for all Catholic education, from the first grade up, that the facilities and opportunities for research in Catholic universities be greatly expanded and improved as rapidly as circumstances permit.

ROY J. DEFERRARI,
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OF NOTE

CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUALITY

IN the September issue of *Worship* (Collegeville, Minnesota) Justus George Lawler writes on "Religious Life: Fundamentals and Accidentals." In the course of his discussion he makes the following remarks:

> A prayer-life which is the product of concepts adapted to one age is liable to be malnourished in a later age. Père André Rabut has written: "To live the Gospel maxims as they are set forth is hardly attainable, for they belong to a world which is historically remote from us. It is necessary to find a substantially faithful transposition which belongs to the real world of today. But we are presented only with tranpositions harmonious to the thirteenth or the seventeenth or the nineteenth century. . . ."

This quotation represents fairly accurately the mentality of many religious persons today. However, for most it is a question not primarily of a transposition, but of a return to the authentic core of the Church's worship. We have the Church—Christ transmitted through time—to provide us with a criterion for determining our prayer-life, and to guard us from attempting, as did the Protestants, a personal transposition of the Gospel teaching. And because the worship of the Church, like the Church itself, does not exist in a supra-temporal framework, it can provide us with this translation of the Gospel ideal into contemporary terms. . . .

But it is remarkable that the Church which in the past has emphasized for the preservation of its doctrine the attribute of immutability should in our time place considerable stress on the property of adaptability. Whereas, on the other hand, the religious societies, which have no direct participation in the immutability of the Church, should in some cases by an obedience degenerating into a spirit of mechanical discipline show themselves to be intent on maintaining their temporal shell, apparently even at all costs.

It is this abuse of obedience, of which Père Régamey has written so eloquently, that is responsible for the not infrequent indifference of many religious persons to the longings of contemporary man. For when free investigation of modern problems is prohibited or discouraged under the guise of preserving religious discipline, then even an awareness of the existence of such problems soon vanishes. . . .

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BOOKS

Indictment

THE MAKING OF A MORON. By Niall Brennan. Sheed & Ward. $2.50.

By GEOFFREY ASHE

APPLES had been falling from trees a long time before Newton. A significant fact, like a fallen apple, has to wait till somebody picks it up. In the field of sociology, one very significant fact indeed—having lain for thirty years unnoticed or slighted by battalions of sociologists—has at length found its way into the nimble hand of Mr. Niall Brennan.

This iconoclastic Australian is no sociologist. On his own showing he is an academic failure, with a career approximating to hoboism. The book he has spun from his observations is funny and startling and devastating. What has he hit upon? Principally, the fact that experiments with mental defectives have proved the capacity of such people to do industrial jobs better than normal human beings.

There is no secret involved. The results of the tests have long been public property. Yet the industrial psychologists—the Elton Mayos and other professorial experts on personnel—have had little or nothing to say about them. One suspects a Freudian lapse. Certainly the plight which this essay puts them in is profoundly comic. They have been talking and talking about the ideal of getting the right man in the right job, always with the bland assumption that the factory system is right itself, and that the real problem is one of human adjustment. Now there is somebody who has carried their logic to a fitting conclusion. The right man has already been discovered, and the right man is the Moron. Put the Moron to work and he is contented, productive, and trustworthy, as his normal co-worker seldom is. Mr. Brennan concludes that industrial society is moronic.

His advantage over the professors is not confined to this deadly *reductio ad absurdum.* He clinches

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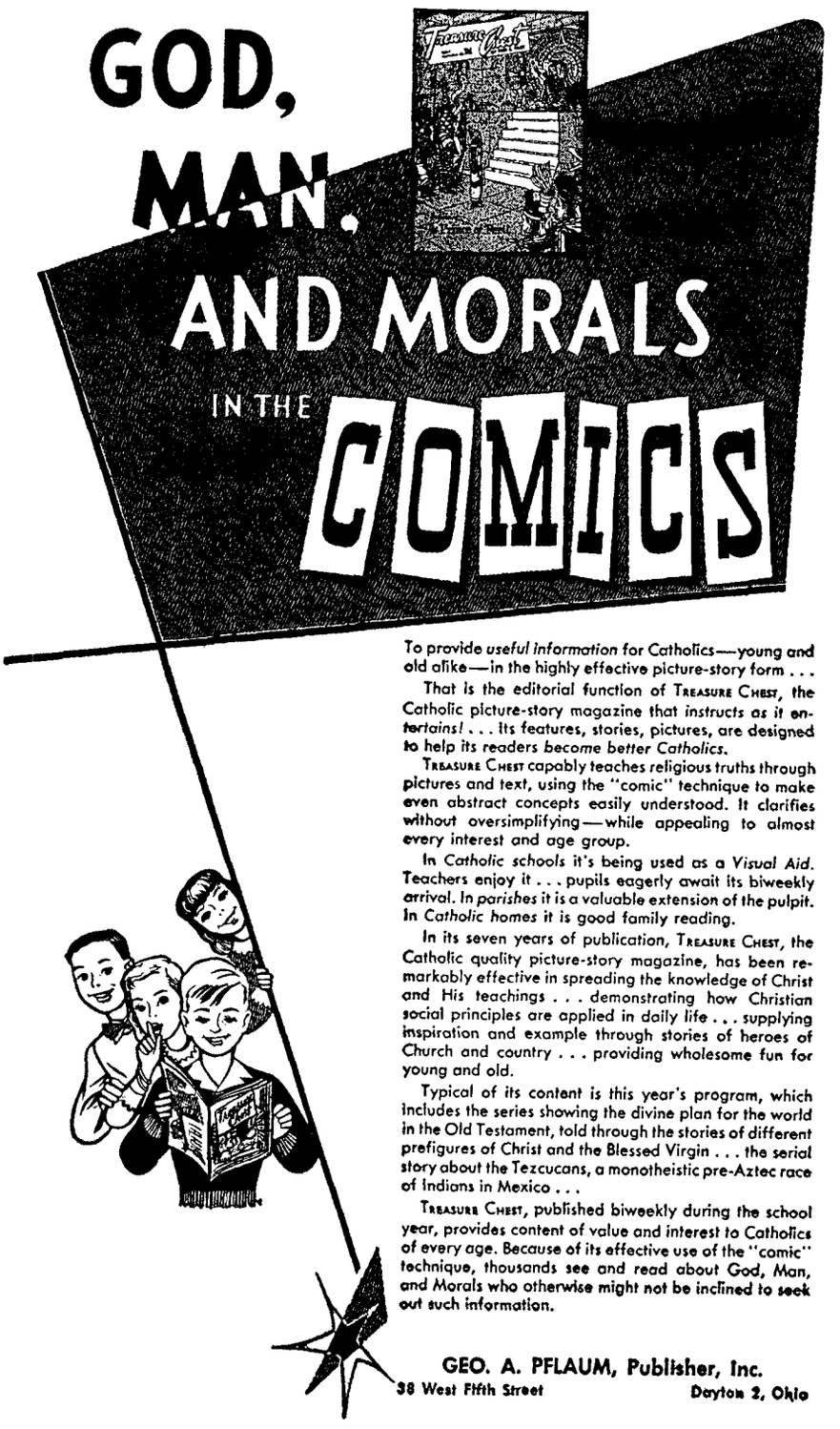
the case with something to which they cannot retaliate—a personal record of experience in manual labor. Mayo and the rest have developed industrial interview techniques for finding out about workers; Mr. Brennan, with inexcusable vulgarity, has actually worked. He has learned how workers talk and behave, and how their minds operate. He has seen how a system which demands nothing of a man but a single stereotyped function must tend to thrust him below the level of full humanity. If the worker is not a moron already, he can best adjust himself by becoming one.

Of course there are shortcomings in Brennan's mode of approach. The worst is that he does not see management's side. In particular, he knows little of the "scientific," "progressive" sort of management which exists in many American enterprises and in some European ones. The boss, for him, is nearly always a short-sighted autocrat concerned only with immediate profit, and the worker is nearly always a puppet who is told nothing and forbidden to think.

Now this indictment has weight. But the situation is more complicated than Brennan represents it to be. True, the scientific managers have stripped away the worker's ability to think and plan. Part of his skill has been built into the machines, part has been transferred to the experts who control his job. However, there are compensations which blur the picture without exactly changing it. Management's enlightened interest has often improved the workers status by means of joint consultation, suggestion schemes, and so forth. At the same time, the managers have exploited technology to bring about a material progress which goes far beyond a mere increase in dividends. Nowadays profit spills over. The prosperous American worker, with his basement hobbies, his garden, and his house-decorating, can build up a life outside the plant which is by no means moronic. Brennan remains substantially right—more so than almost anyone else who is theorizing about industry—but he oversimplifies.

His remedy is craftsmanship: an organization of human labor which uses the whole man. Amenities such as "hot showers, rest-rooms, cafeterias, armchairs" (one might add human-relations programs) he rejects with contempt. Workers who are satisfied with that sort of thing have surrendered. They are well on the way to the Huxleyan Brave New World. Brennan maintains that the system itself needs changing.

It is hard to answer him. A recent clinical study called *The Man on the Assembly Line* bears him out in all essential particulars, and proves, incidentally, that plenty of workers are still far from capitula-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by

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tion. However, the Chestertonian revolution which he seems to desire is at present too much to ask for. The cure probably lies in guided technological change. Hopeful trends have already emerged, and the job of guiding them is revolutionary enough for anyone. But how do you make a revolutionist of an engineer? I don't know.

Magic

THE PALM WINE DRINKARD. By Amos Tutuola. Grove. $2.75.

By ANNE FREMANTLE

THIS story, "written in young English by a West African," has a saga quality that is combined with terrifying, immediate relevancy. For here are all the devils, the bogies, the ghoulies and ghosties and things that go bump in the night, of prehistory and history, written, without affectation or archaism, today, of today and for today, by a fellow-subject of the Mau-Mau. Here are modern realities, sandpaper, telephones, football fields, airplanes, but also a powerful magic called *juju*. Here are a technicolor night-club, a tree that takes photographs, but also a Dead's Town where the inhabitants behave like Nazis at Auschwitz.

The story, told in the first person, is that of the eldest of eight children, who was a palm-wine drinkard since he was ten years old. He had no other work than to drink palm-wine, which a palm-wine tapster tapped from the 560,000 palm-trees the hero's father had given him. But after fifteen years, the palm-wine tapster fell down from one of the tallest palm trees on a Sunday evening, and was killed. The hero, now twenty-five, finds he cannot tap enough wine to satisfy himself (he averaged two hundred and twenty-five kegs of palm wine a day) and of course could not drink ordinary water for "I did not satisfy with it as with palm-wine." Also, now he had no palm-wine to offer them, his friends all desert him. So, realizing that "the whole people who had died in this world did not go to heaven directly, but were living in one place somewhere in this world," he decided "I would find out where my palm-wine tapster who had died was." All he took with him was his *juju*, and his father's *juju*. So he began his pilgrimage.

Of course, like all heroes, he boasts. Not that he had killed "seven at a blow" like Grimm's fly-swatting tailor, but that his name was "Father of god who could do everything in this world." He is challenged, first by an old man, who was really a god eating his wife when they met. This old man sends our hero to get a bell from his native blacksmith; then he sends him to bring Death home in a net. This is a truly Homeric incident: Death and the hero fight a duel in Death's yam-yard. "I myself commanded the ropes of the yams in his yard to tight him in there, and the yam stakes should begin to beat him also . . . when Death saw that these stakes were beating him repeatedly, then he commanded the string of the drum which tighted me to release me, and I was released at the same time."

The entire tale is in the great quest-story tradition, but in its total inconsequence and in its continual trespassing into other worlds, of magic, of the dead, it is most like the Chinese *Monkey* that Arthur Waley translated. The effortless transition from the seemingly rational and human to the fantastic is nowhere else so casual, so constant: the two, or three worlds are "strangely one."

Amos Tutuola, a native of Abeokuta, sixty-four miles from Lagos, born in 1920, had six years of elementary school, during the whole of which he never seems to have had enough to eat. Later he was trained as a blacksmith, and during the war worked for the RAF as a metalmaker. Now he is in the Government Labor Department in Lagos, which he describes as "this unsatisfactory job which I am still carrying on at present." It is much to be hoped he will be set free from it to write, for here is a genuine freshness of creativity, able to assimilate the old and the new, and to make from both something ab-

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solutely original. The English used is as much his own as Chaucer's was. How grateful we should be to this *juju* that in 1953 can nourish us with such fresh language and such wonderfully novel tall tales!

Stalinism

FROM LENIN TO MALENKOV. By Hugh Seton-Watson. Praeger. $6.

By MICHAEL HARRINGTON

HUGH Seton-Watson's *From Lenin to Malenkov* promises to become one of the most basic, indispensable source books on the history of international Stalinism. In factual richness and thoroughness, it must rank with the studies of Franz Borkenau as a guide to the complex twistings and turnings of Communist parties throughout the world in the last thirty years.

Professor Seton-Watson discusses almost all of the Communist Parties in the world, although there is no reference to the activities of the American Stalinists. He is probably most at home in describing the East European and Russian movements (he has written other books on these areas), but he includes extremely interesting data on Asia and South America.

From Lenin to Malenkov is not, however, merely a chronology of Stalinist organizations. Methodologically, Seton-Watson gives his material depth by analyzing the political, economic and social context of the development of the various Communist movements. In doing this, he lays particular stress on the class composition of the opposing forces. And by doing it, he is able to differentiate the Communist parties of today, for instance between the pro-Soviet pressure blocs of Western Europe and the revolutionary movements of Asia.

This kind of an analysis destroys the oversimplified version of the "international revolution" which plagues so much of our popular thinking. For, as Seton-Watson points out, the Stalinized movements which developed (after 1922 or '23) in conformity with the

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Comintern line rather than in response to the social conditions of their own country, have not been revolutionary at all, indeed have abandoned the struggle for the overthrow of their governments at the command of the Soviet line. But the national revolutionary movements—Yugoslavia and China, for instance—have had a tremendously different development and we should orient toward them accordingly.

Political analysis, in the sense of proposing immediate policies, is kept subservient to the major historical and sociological intent of the book. Seton-Watson is pro-West (and I violently disagree with him in some of his suggestions), but he insists that we must work out socially progressive policies positively, as a result of our tradition, and not propagandistically, as a grudging response to the Stalinist challenge. With certain historical judgments I would disagree, but they are relatively minor. For instance, I think that Seton-Watson assigns to Lenin a consciousness of the totalitarian potential of what he was doing which is unfair.

Yet, my criticisms are minor. If Seton-Watson had spelled out his version of Western foreign policy at greater length there might be much to which I would object. But as it stands, *From Lenin to Malenkov* is an extraordinarily comprehensive and deep analysis of one of the most important movements of our time. The last chapter, with its summation of the class differences and stratifications in Stalinism and its discussion of governmental mechanism, is a stimulating, even exciting, conclusion to an excellent book. *From Lenin to Malenkov* is essential to any informed student of Stalinism.

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Full Explanation

THE STORY OF ESTHER COSTELLO. By Nicholas Monsarrat. Knopf. $3.50.

By EDWIN KENNEBECK

ESTHER Costello is a girl who cannot hear, speak or see, having suffered a deep shock in an accidental explosion as a child. To her small, impoverished town in Ireland, when she is about twelve, comes a rich American lady named Mrs. Bannister. Mrs. Bannister is quite a honey, and naturally on seeing her the men of the town all make bawdy remarks and indulge in "rough laughter." But she evidently has some humane qualities; revisiting the place of her birth, she explores the village and eventually hears of Esther, who is kept, nearly forgotten, in a shack behind her parents' house. As Mrs. Bannister approaches Esther's shed, she is "aware of a strange feeling . . . as if she were . . . doing something that would involve her, irrevocably, in a new aspect of life."

Well, when Mr. Monsarrat tells us something is going to happen (and he prepares us regularly), we know it's going to happen. Mrs. Bannister *does* become involved in a new aspect of life. She takes Esther to America in the vain hope

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of curing her by medical treatment. Devoting much time and love to the girl, she teaches Esther to communicate with her hands and to emerge a little from her vegetable-like existence. Then she finds herself giving a series of public demonstrations with Esther in the interests of charity. The world being what it is, these demonstrations begin to make a lot of money, and with the appearance of the bad guy (Mrs. Bannister's long absent and strangely persuasive husband), Esther becomes the unwitting dupe of a racket.

This novel, by the author of *The Cruel Sea,* has one really human passage, concerning Esther as she is leaving Ireland:

> Only once had she known surprise or fear, and that was when they first reached the quayside, and Esther suddenly lifted her head and sniffed the air. The strange pungent smell seemed to frighten her, and she clung to Mrs. Bannister . . . all the time cocking her nose upwards like an animal lifting its muzzle to a dark, unknown night.

Mr. Monsarrat ruthlessly suffocates this one bright sign of real emotion in his remaining two hundred and twenty-eight pages. The idea of this novel is a little like a Ben Hecht movie of some years back called "Nothing Sacred" (since made into a mediocre musical called "Hazel Flagg") in which Carole Lombard performed delightfully as a girl who everybody thought was dying of cancer. The movie had some genuine irony and wit, and it did leave, now and then, a few points for the audience to figure out for themselves. In the present work Mr. Monsarrat seems to feel he has to explain everything. Now there is only one thing left to explain.

REVIEWERS

Geoffrey Ashe, a writer on literary and industrial questions, lives in Windsor, Ontario.

Michael Harrington is a regular contributor to The Commonweal.

Edwin Kennebeck is on the editorial staff of Funk and Wagnall's.

BERNANOS

During the early nineteen forties Georges Bernanos sent The Commonweal a number of articles from his place of voluntary exile deep in the interior of Brazil. Like his world-famed novels they were impassioned protests against the evils of the times. The following excerpt is from an article on Fascism (The Commonweal, March 19, 1943):

"It will always be far easier for me to die than to be impressed by the pretentious scare-crows who now are terrifying modern society, the masquerade kings of carnival parading now in the darkest carnival that has ever taken place in history. . . . It is not the lightning speed of the totalitarian success which will stupefy the historians of the future, but indeed the manner of fascination which totalitarianism exerted on Europe's democracies."

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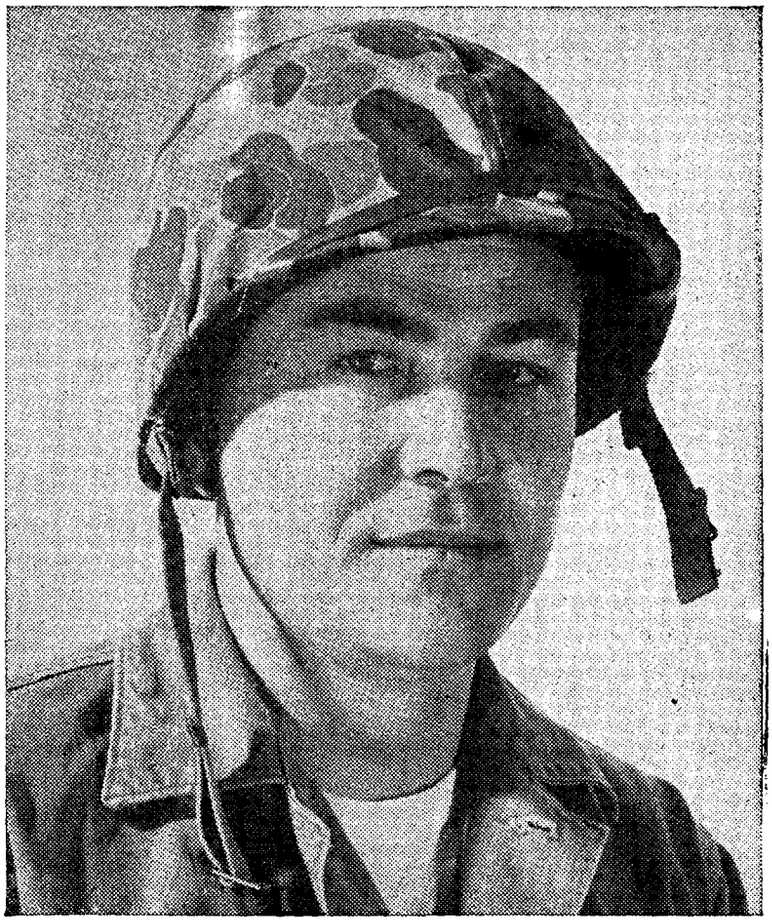
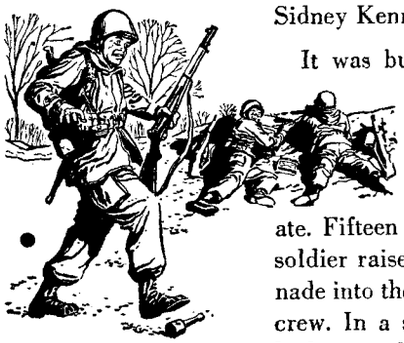


Technical Sergeant
Robert S. Kennemore, USMC
Medal of Honor

Under His Foot, the Live Grenade



THE MACHINE GUN belonged to E Company, Second Battalion, Seventh Marines. It was under the command of Technical Sergeant Robert Sidney Kennemore.

It was busy. For on this November night fanatical Red masses were swamping Marine defense positions north of Yudam-ni.

Fighting was close and desperate. Fifteen yards in front of the gun, a Red soldier raised his body briefly and sent a grenade into the air. It landed squarely among the crew. In a split second, Sergeant Kennemore had covered it with his foot.

There was a violent, muffled explosion, but not a man was hurt. Not a man except Sergeant Kennemore. He had given both his legs to save his comrades' lives.

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